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Tuesday, October 3, 2017 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

PHILLY RALLY FOR VEGAS VICTIMS

City Hall officials and gun safety activists are planning a rally today. 4

Anthony Anderson pays it forward. 13

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HORRIFIC MASSACRE

The nation's largest mass shooting has left at least 59 people dead and more than 500 wounded in Las Vegas. 2

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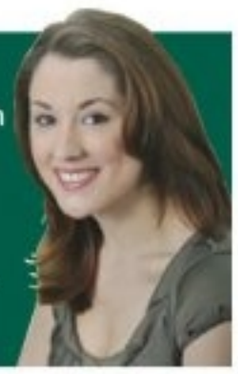
SPECIAL COVERAGE

WELCOME TO METRO PHILLY

MORGAN ROUSSEAU, MANAGING EDITOR
Yesterday the nation awoke to news of yet another deadly mass shooting after a gunman opened fire on a crowd of 22,000, killing 59 and wounding hundreds of others. In a rare moment of sensitivity, our president called for unity and asked for prayers. His message was comforting, but with more than 1,500 mass shootings since Sandy Hook, America must do more than pray. Follow along with Metro as the U.S. moves forward from this horrible attack by visiting **metro.us**.



Two hours of horror and disbelief as gunman opens fire in Las Vegas

The bloodshed took a toll on local hospital emergency rooms.

When the shooting began, some refused to believe a massacre was underway.

Country music singer Jason Aldean was in the middle of a guitar solo at an outdoor concert on the Las Vegas Strip on Sunday night and the sold-out crowd was enjoying the moment, unaware of the horror about to unfold.

"It's not real gunshots," one man yelled as panicked concertgoers ducked for cover. "It's the fireworks, fireworks! Guys, stop, stop."

The time was 10:07 p.m., the start of nearly two hours of terror before police would confirm that the gunman was down.

Police would eventually reveal that 64-year-old Stephen Paddock, armed with at least 10 rifles, fired into the crowd of 22,000 people from his 32nd floor room at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino. At least 59 people were killed and 527 wounded in the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history.

Disbelief quickly gave way to reality as volley after volley of rapid gunfire rained down on the Route 91 Festival.

"We got shots fired!" a Las Vegas police officer radioed in at 10:08 p.m. "It sounded like an automatic firearm."

The moments were recorded by many social media users. Reuters pieced together events based on verified video, police and other official statements, and reporters on the scene from the Las Vegas Review-Journal.

Out on the streets, taxi drivers received word of the danger within minutes when an advisory of police activity came across the blue screens on their taxi meters.

"Drivers avoid LV Blvd and Tropicana. Active shooting from Mandalay Bay. Possible 3 shooters," the alert said at 10:25 p.m.

Minutes later, police ordered people to take cover inside the Mandalay Bay. "Even cabbies must exit their vehicles and go into hotel," LV Cabbie Chronicles tweeted at 10:28 p.m.

People take cover at the country music festival after gunfire was heard on Sunday in Las Vegas. GETTY IMAGES

"We got shots fired! ... It sounded like an automatic firearm."

A Las Vegas police officer radioed in at 10:08 p.m.

Citizens turned their private vehicles into ambulances, and others became on-the-spot medics, using metal crowd-control stanchions as stretchers.

"We have a head shot. We have a head shot," one man yelled in a video of volunteer medics at work.

Lindsay Lee, a self-described Las Vegas tattoo model, turned her truck into an ambulance when a man at the scene asked her to take victims to the hospital.

Then came a moment that few volunteers could be prepared for.

"One died in the back of the truck and my fiance had to carry him inside the hospital," Lee said on Instagram. "This was a nightmare. I've never ran for my life like I did tonight."

A full 90 minutes after the shooting started, police were still ordering people on the street to get down and take cover.

Rachel Crosby, a reporter for the Review-Journal, saw events unfold from University Medical Center, the only Level 1 trauma center in Nevada, where all the trauma beds were full.

"I have seen a handful of nurses jogging into front and back hospital entrances," Crosby tweeted. "I have seen a handful of citizens speed-walking away from trauma center. Color drained from faces."

The bloodshed took an obvious toll on hospital staff.

"More and more staff wearing scrubs keep filing in UMC entrances," Crosby said.

Police have yet to pinpoint when the deadly assault came to an end.

But finally, just short of two hours after the shooting began, came the first sign that the danger had passed.

"Confirming that one suspect is down," Las Vegas police tweeted at 11:58 p.m. "This is an active investigation. Again, please do not head down to the Strip at this time."

REUTERS

LAS VEGAS MASSACRE

The gunman, Stephen Paddock, checked into the hotel three days before the shooting.

527 Injured*

59 Confirmed dead*

32 The gunman's room was located on the 32 floor.

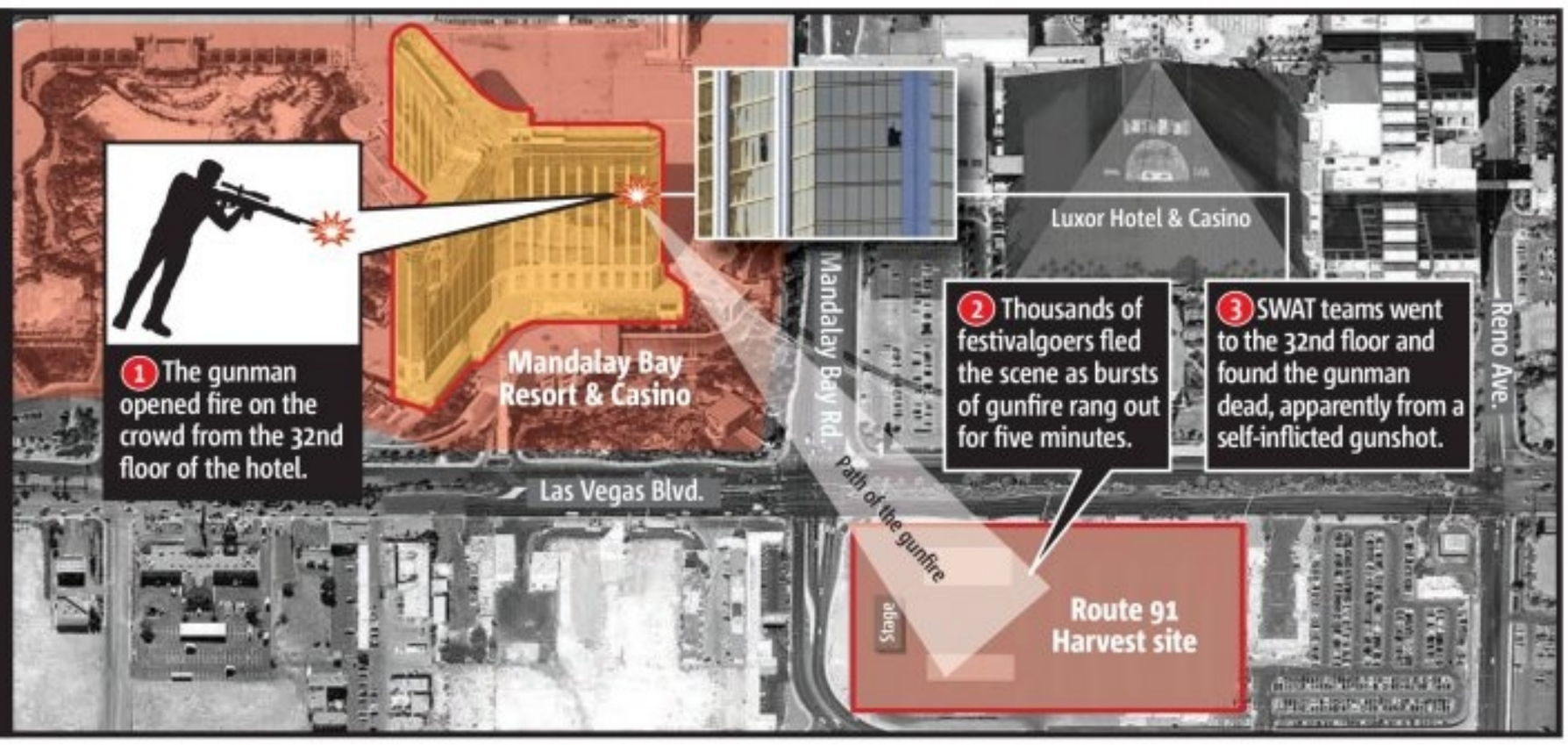
20 Rifles found in the gunman's room.

22K People attended the festival.

**As of press time*

Source: Bing maps, Reuters

GRAPHIC BY BILLY BECERRA, METRO


1 The gunman opened fire on the crowd from the 32nd floor of the hotel.
Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino
Las Vegas Blvd.
Mandalay Bay Rd.
Path of the gunfire
2 Thousands of festivalgoers fled the scene as bursts of gunfire rang out for five minutes.
Luxor Hotel & Casino
3 SWAT teams went to the 32nd floor and found the gunman dead, apparently from a self-inflicted gunshot.
Reno Ave.
Route 91 Harvest site
Sahara

south moon under
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US OFFICIALS RESPOND

US officials skeptical of ISIS claims on Las Vegas shooting

Islamic State claimed responsibility for a shooting in which a 64-year-old American man killed at least 59 people and wounded at least 515 in Las Vegas, but U.S. officials said there was no evidence linking the gunman to any militant group.

In its claim, Islamic State said the gunman had converted to Islam a few months ago, according to the group's news agency, Amaq.

U.S. officials said American security agencies were examining the claim of responsibility.

"The Las Vegas attack was carried out by a soldier of the Islamic State and he carried it out in response to calls to target states of the coalition," Amaq news agency said in reference to the U.S.-led coalition in the Middle East.

In a later statement from Islamic State, the militant group referred to the Las Vegas attacker by a nom de guerre of "Abu Abd al-Bar al-Ameriki."

U.S. authorities said the gunman, who lived in a retirement home in Mesquite, Nevada, and was armed with more than 10 rifles, opened fire on a Las Vegas country music festival on Sunday.

The man, identified as Stephen Paddock, killed himself before police entered the hotel room he was shooting from, police said.

Two senior U.S. government officials told Reuters that Paddock's name was not on any database of suspected terrorists. There was reason to believe that Paddock had a history of psychological problems, one official said. REUTERS

Philadelphia rally for Vegas victims to be held on Tuesday

City Hall officials and gun safety activists are planning a rally for victims of the Las Vegas shooting.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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America woke up to a tragic, record-shattering mass shooting on Monday morning. Again.

"It's outrageous and horrific that in this country, we continually are changing the label of what's the worst mass shooting in modern history," said Shira Goodman, executive director of CeaseFire PA, a gun safety advocacy group, in the wake of the Las Vegas music festival shooting that left at least 59 dead and more than 500 injured — yet again breaking the country's record for the worst mass shooting in history.

"Last year, it was Pulse. This year, it's Las Vegas. This doesn't happen anywhere else," Goldstein said. "This is preventable. This is not how we need to live."

CeaseFire PA and city officials will be holding a vigil Tuesday evening for the victims of the Vegas shooting at Thomas Paine Plaza in front of the Municipal Services Building, Goodman said. They will be calling for action by elected officials in Washington and Harrisburg to stop the ongoing gun-related bloodshed in the U.S., she said.

"This is their job, and they can't get a pass on it anymore. It's up to us as voters and constituents to make our voices heard," she said, "because we can't afford this anymore."

City Council President Darrell Clarke released a statement demanding legislative action after the mass shooting.

"I'm angry that the wealthiest and most powerful nation in the world cannot muster the political will to regulate the manufacture, sale and trafficking of deadly weapons. Most people have no business owning a weapon manufactured for war — let alone 10," he said. "Living in terror of random gun violence in our concert venues, movie theaters and schools is not freedom."

The ongoing political struggle over Second Amendment rights, gun control and the accessibility of guns in the U.S. to mentally ill people has raged for years. Under the Trump administration, Congress has already pushed through some rollbacks of gun regulations.

Later this week, they were set to hear a bill reducing restrictions, Goodman pointed out.

"Can you imagine if this guy had a silencer, if nobody heard anything, people just started dropping?" she asked. "What are we doing in this country? Making it easier for people to carry silencers, to carry guns across state lines, instead of making sure kids don't have guns? ... We can't accept this anymore."

A cowboy hat lays in the street after the Las Vegas mass shooting on Sunday night. GETTY IMAGES

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Mass shootings 'not 100 percent preventable,' an expert explains

"No level of screening, no level of monitoring will ever be enough to bring us to 100 percent prevention," said one criminal justice professor.

NIKKI M. MASCALI
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Chelsea A. Binns is an assistant professor in the Department of Security, Fire and Emergency Management at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. PROVIDED

As the nation reels from the Las Vegas shooting on Sunday — which was the deadliest mass shooting in U.S. history, with at least 59 killed and more than 500 injured — many are wondering if the tragedy was preventable.

The short answer is, sadly, no, according to Chelsea A. Binns, an assistant professor in the department of security, fire and emergency management at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City.

"No level of screening, no level of monitoring will ever be enough to bring us to 100 percent prevention," Binns told Metro on Monday.

It's a bleak reality, especially in a time when mass shootings are more commonplace — and always top of mind for security professionals.

"It's true that active-shooter incidents have risen drastically since 2000, yet mass shootings are still more rare," Binns said. "But nevertheless, they are a serious concern for any security professional, and they actively work to plan and prepare for — and also prevent and detect these events."

Do we know how many incidents may have been prevented due to such security efforts?

Chelsea A. Binns: We never fully know as an industry how well we're doing in preventing these tragedies because it's difficult to quantify crimes averted or thwarted due to security measures. In other words, how many shootings such as this didn't happen as a result of security measures, heightened vigilance, tips from the public regarding suspicious activity, etc.

Beyond metal detectors and bag searches, is there more venues and event planners can do?

In addition to stringent security measures and heightened vigilance, one of the best is public awareness, educating the public regarding their value in crime prevention. Many crimes are solved and also thwarted due to tips from the public. In New York City, we have the "See Something, Say Something" campaign, and this exists for a reason — because it works.

Is it best to flag anything and everything you see that seems suspicious?

Yes, it is, and any law-enforcement professional will tell you that they'd rather hear a tip however innocuous a member of the public might think it is. You never know what value it has for law enforcement. You never know who law enforcement might be looking at that point in time or whether they have a heightened suspicion that you're now confirming for them. Tips are always valued.

Has your curriculum changed in the wake of these recent incidents?

Students are made aware of the statistics, and incidents that have taken place in the past do serve as an educational tool for students, who will examine the preventative measures that were in place and the response and determine what has worked and perhaps what didn't work to gain a better understanding of security procedures going forward.

Do they undergo field exercises or mock events in their training?

There absolutely are exercises such as those that are conducted, and it's a part of any corporate security repertoire or any emergency management repertoire to actively prepare for these events, no matter how rare, so when they do occur, there is a very well-designed and organized response and approach that follows. Whenever something like this happens, it's not unfamiliar, no matter how rare.

Top Arthritis Painkiller is a Cream Not a Pill

New cream works faster and is more targeted than oral medications. Key ingredients penetrate the skin within seconds to relieve joint arthritis pain. Users report significant immediate relief.

By Robert Ward
Associated Health Press

BOSTON – Innovus Pharmaceuticals has introduced a new arthritis pain relief treatment that works in seconds.

Sold under the brand name *Apeaz™*, the new pain relief cream numbs the nerves right below the skin.

When applied to an arthritic joint, or a painful area on the body, it delivers immediate relief that lasts for hours and hours.

The powerful painkilling effect is created by the creams active ingredient, a special medical compound.

Anesthetics are used in hospitals during surgery. They block nerve signals from the brain so that patients don't feel pain and they work fast.

The anesthetic found in *Apeaz™* is the strongest available without a prescription.

The cream form allows users to directly target their area of pain. It works where it is applied. The company says this is why the product is so effective and fast acting.

"Users can expect to feel relief immediately after applying," explains Dr. Bassam Damaj, President of Innovus Pharmaceuticals.

"There will a pleasant warming sensation that is followed by a cool, soothing one. This is how you know that the active ingredients have reached the infected joint and tissue."

Works In Seconds

For arthritis suffers, Apeaz offers impressive advantages over traditional medications. The most obvious is how quickly it relieves discomfort.

The cream contains the maximum approved dose of a top anesthetic, which penetrates the skin in a matter of seconds to numb the area that's in pain. This relief lasts for several hours.

Additional ingredients in the cream help suppress inflammation around tissues and joints. Published pre-clinical studies have shown that the ingredients in *Apeaz™* can also prevent further bone and cartilage destruction.

There are also no negative side effects from the oral medication. *Apeaz™* delivers its ingredients through the skin. Oral medications are absorbed in the digestive tract. Overtime, the chemicals in pills can tear the delicate lining of the stomach, causing ulcers and bleeding.

When compared to other arthritis medications, *Apeaz™* is a fraction of the cost. At less than $2 a day, the cream quickly is becoming a household name.

Those with terrible arthritis in their hands and fingers, love how easy Apeaz™ is to open. The jar fits in the palm of the hand, which makes it much easier to use.

Instant Pain Relief Without a Prescription

Many *Apeaz™* users report significant improvements in daily aches and pain. Many more report increased flexibility and less stiffness. They are moving pain free for the first time in years, like Henry Esber, and early user of *Apeaz™*.

Apeaz™ is an FDA drug with approved claims for the pain relief of the following conditions:

- Arthritis pain
- Simple back pain
- Strains
- Sprains
- Athletic injuries
- Muscle stiffness and pain
- Wrist, elbow, shoulder, hip, knee, ankle, foot, muscle or joint pain

"I've tried more pills than I can count. I've also had a handful of cortisone shots. Nothing is as effective as this product. With Apeaz™, I get relief right away. I rub a little on my knees and some through my hands. It keeps the pain away. It also prevents the pain from getting really bad. It's completely changed my life."

How It Works

"*Apeaz™* contains the highest, non-prescription dose of a medical compound that fights pain on contact. When applied to the skin it goes to work within seconds by penetrating right to the source of your pain, numbing the nerve endings."

"This is why *Apeaz™* is so effective for people with arthritis. It reduces pain while adding an additional layer of joint protection," explains Damaj.

A New Way to Treat Pain

Although Dr. Damaj and his team say that their cream is the fastest and most effective way to relieve arthritis pain, they believe there is still a reason to take joint pills. **The most effective are those which help to further strengthen and support the joints.**

That's why every container of *Apeaz™* comes with ArthriVarx™, a breakthrough pill that's taking on joint support in an entirely new way.

ArthriVarx™ works on your joints, making it the perfect companion to *Apeaz™*.

Apeaz™: Quick Acting Pain and Arthritis Cream is Now Available Without a Prescription

"ArthriVarx™ contains special compounds published to lubricate the joints and connective tissues that surrounds them. With daily use, they improve joint health and can give an extra cushion," explains Dr. Damaj.

"When combined with *Apeaz™*, it becomes the perfect system to tackle arthritis. While the anesthetic component of *Apeaz™* is working on the outside, relieving pain on contact, ArthriVarx™ is working on the inside, adding cushioning to the joints"'

A Powerful Combination For Arthritis and Joint Pain

With daily use, *Apeaz™* plus ArthriVarx™ helps users live a more vital, pain free life without any of the negative side effects or interactions associated with oral drugs.

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You can now enjoy an entirely new level of comfort that's both safe and affordable. It is also extremely effective, especially if nothing else has worked well for you.

How to Get Apeaz™ in Pennsylvania

This is the official public release of *Apeaz™*. As such, the company is offering a special discounted supply to any joint-pain arthritis-sufferer who calls within the next 48 hours.

A special hotline number and discounted pricing has been created for all Pennsylvania residents. Discounts will be available starting today at 6:00AM and will automatically be applied to all callers.

Your Toll-Free hotline number is 1-800-426-4135 and will only be open for the next 48 hours. Only a limited discounted supply of *Apeaz™* is currently available in your region.

Consumers who miss out on our current product inventory will have to wait until more becomes available and that could take weeks. Experience the guaranteed *Apeaz™* relief already enjoyed by thousands of consumers. The company advises not to wait. Call 1-800-426-4135 today.

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Las Vegas police stand guard during Sunday night's mass shooting. GETTY IMAGES

How to survive an active shooter attack

After the Las Vegas mass shooting, these are tips and tricks that can help you survive.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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A lone person with a small arsenal approaches a crowded area and begins shooting indiscriminately.

It's unthinkable. And yet, it happened again — this week in Las Vegas. Experts on "active shooters" — armed assailants who are "active" in that they are mobile, and their location is unknown — have a multitude of tips and techniques for how to survive these attacks.

"Run, Hide, Fight"

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security and other law enforcement agencies typically recommend that people in an active-shooter situation remember to "run, hide and fight."

While these steps may seem simple, panic-stricken victims sometimes forget them, listed in order of priority.

The first, easiest and safest step to take if you encounter an active shooter is to run. Find an escape path and evacuate, whether others agree or not. Do not carry any belongings with you and move in a zig-zag motion while fleeing. Other tips include to help others if possible, prevent newcomers from entering the area of the shooting and call 911 after reaching a safe distance from the scene.

If you can't evacuate, you should attempt to hide. Lock or blockade the door, silence your cellphone, hide behind large objects and attempt to remain very quiet. Try to find a hiding place that blocks you from the shooter's view, would protect you if shots are fired in your direction and that does not obstruct possible escape options.

Fight, the last option, is one that unarmed civilians may not consider when attacked by a gunman. Nonetheless, a group of two to four would-be victims can easily overpower even a heavily armed lone shooter. If escape and hiding are not an option, confronting the shooter may be your best chance for survival.

Experts advise trying to incapacitate the shooter, using physical aggression, improvising weapons out of nearby objects and "committing to your actions" — meaning don't stop until you know the shooter is down.

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NORTH KOREA

White House again rejects talks with North Korea on nuclear issue

The White House on Monday ruled out talks with North Korea except to discuss the fate of Americans held there, again appearing to rebuke Secretary of State Rex Tillerson who said Washington was directly communicating with Pyongyang.

"We've been clear that now is not the time to talk," White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders told reporters.

"The only conversations that have taken place were that ... would be on bringing back Americans who have been detained," Sanders said. "Beyond that, there will be no conversations with North Korea at this time."

Tillerson said during a trip to China that the United States was directly communicating with North Korea on its nuclear and missile programs but that Pyongyang had shown no interest in dialogue.

"I told Rex Tillerson, our wonderful secretary of state, that he is wasting his time trying to negotiate with Little Rocket Man," Trump wrote on Twitter, using his sarcastic nickname for Kim.

"Save your energy, Rex, we'll do what has to be done!" Trump wrote.

It was not the first time the White House and State Department have seemed at odds on policy issues, but when asked if Trump still had confidence in Tillerson as secretary of state, Sanders said: "He does."

A senior administration official said Tillerson misspoke.

"I think it was just him misspeaking. He was just acknowledging the fact that we do have channels and we might have reason to talk if North Korea's behavior changes sometime down the road," the official said.

The top U.S. diplomat expressed hope for reducing tensions with North Korea, which is fast advancing toward its goal of developing a nuclear-tipped missile capable of hitting the U.S. mainland. REUTERS

Gun stocks rise in wake of Las Vegas mass shooting

Several top firearm manufacturers reported a rise in their stocks Monday.

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After the deadly mass shooting that took place on Sunday in Las Vegas that killed 59 people and injured more than 500, gun stocks are on the rise.

In the wake of what is now considered the largest mass shooting in U.S. history, there was a noticeable climb on Monday in the stock prices for major gun makers, according to financial site MarketWatch.

American Outdoor Brands Corp. (parent company of Smith & Wesson), Sturm, Ruger & Co. and Vista Outdoors rose 2.3 percent, 3.7 percent and 1.4 percent, respectively.

According to analysts, gun stocks tend to rise after mass shootings in the country. In American Outdoor Brands' annual report, the firearms manufacturer told investors several times that "speculation surrounding increased gun control at the federal, state, and local level and heightened fears of terrorism and crime" will affect the demand for guns.

Last year, after the deadly mass shooting in Orlando, Florida, stock shares of Smith & Wesson, Sturm Ruger rose close to 10 percent the Monday following the tragic incident, according to CNN Money. The mass shooting killed 49 people and wounded about 58. It was reported that firearm manufacturers made $632 million in profits after the deadly mass shooting that happened at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, that killed 20 children and six adults in 2012.

Despite the spikes in gun sales after the most recent mass shooting incident, overall guns sales have gone down since Trump became president, according to Business Insider. Gun lovers became less concerned about control regulations because they believe Trump would not force tough regulations.

During the Obama administration, people rushed to purchase firearms because they feared gun control laws. If Hillary Clinton were elected as president, it would have been likely that she would have pursued gun-control measures similar to those Obama did when he was president.

3.7%

ACCORDING TO MARKETWATCH, STOCK PRICES FOR STURM, RUGER & CO. ROSE 3.7% ON MONDAY.

According to analysts, gun stocks tend to rise after mass shootings. GETTY IMAGES

PUERTO RICO

US weighs around $13 billion in disaster aid for Puerto Rico, others: Officials

The Trump administration is preparing to ask Congress for around $13 billion in aid to help Puerto Rico and other areas hit by natural disasters, congressional sources said Monday, with the request likely by next week.

The money would help Puerto Rico recover from Hurricane Maria, which devastated the U.S. territory, leaving a large part of the island without electricity or clean drinking water and food shortages.

President Donald Trump will visit Puerto Rico on Tuesday amid questions over whether his administration has acted with enough urgency in helping to distribute emergency supplies.

Congressional sources said they did not have a precise figure for the likely new aid request, but said $13 billion was in the range of what was under consideration.

Officials at FEMA did not respond to a request for comment.

REUTERS

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What was Las Vegas shooter Stephen Paddock's motive?

Here's what we know about the killer of 59 and the possible reasons behind the horrific attack.

MORGAN ROUSSEAU
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Stephen Paddock's motive is still a mystery.

Though neighbors described him as a recluse, there was never any indication that he had a political or religious affiliation. As of Monday, police had not found any evidence that the attack was linked to terrorism. Before Sunday, the retired accountant's only run-in with the law was a routine traffic violation.

Yet Paddock, 64, killed 59 people and wounded 515 others when he opened fire on a crowd of 22,000 at a Las Vegas country music festival on Sunday night. Paddock later shot and killed himself as police closed in on him. Now questions are swirling about the killer's reason for the horrific attack.

Stephen Paddock and gambling

His brother, Eric Paddock, told CBS that Stephen had no history of mental illness but that he gambled. Police shed more light on the habit, calling it a gambling problem, Newsweek reported. The Las Vegas Review-Journal reported that Paddock favored slot machines and video poker, and sued a Vegas casino for negligence in 2012 after he said he slipped and fell on the casino floor. The lawsuit was dropped two years later.

Eric Paddock told news media Monday that he was not aware of any financial struggles in his brother's life.

"As far as we knew, he had enough money to live the rest of his life in comfort," he said.

Stephen Paddock and guns

Neighbors also said Paddock had a large safe in his home, but no one ever saw him handling or storing large amounts of guns and ammunition. His brother said Monday that he was shocked to find out that Stephen had a cache of 10 or more guns at the time of the shooting.

Police found some firearms in his home, and his brother said Paddock owned a couple handguns and a rifle but was "not an avid gun guy at all."

"The fact that he had those kinds of weapons is just – where the hell did he get automatic weapons?" he told CBS News. Eric Paddock told the media there was "just no reason, no warning" before the shooting.

Stephen Paddock and family

"He was nice to my kids when they went out to Vegas. My kids didn't know him that well. He lives on the other coast and that kind of thing. He sends his mom cookies," the younger Paddock said.

Stephen Paddock pictured in an older photograph. HANDOUT

For several years, Stephen Paddock had a girlfriend, Marilou Danley, with whom he lived and traveled, according to The Washington Post. Danley, 62, is described as an Australian of Asian heritage. Police named Danley as a person of interest, but after interviewing her, police released a statement saying they don't believe she was involved in the shooting, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reported.

Paddock's father was a well-known bank robber and on the FBI's 10 most wanted list after escaping prison in the 1960s, according to his brother. The Daily News reports that Patrick Benjamin Paddock went by several aliases, including "Old Baldy" and Chromedome." He was arrested in his 30s for robbing a bank in Phoenix. He was living with his wife and four kids in Tucson at the time.

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Trump: Las Vegas mass shooting 'an act of pure evil'

People run from the Route 91 Harvest country music festival after apparent gunfire was heard on Oct. 1, 2017, in Las Vegas, Nevada. GETTY IMAGES

Speaking hours after a mass shooting on the Las Vegas Strip killed at least 59 people and injured hundreds, President Donald Trump said America should come together as one in order to heal.

"Our unity cannot be shattered by evil, our bonds cannot be broken by violence, and though we feel such great anger, at the senseless murder of our fellow citizens, it is our love that defines us today. And always will. Forever," Trump said in a rare moment of sensitivity.

The remarks came after gunman Stephen Paddock, 64, opened fire at a country-music concert Sunday night in the deadliest mass shooting in recent U.S. history.

The president called the horrifying attack "an act of pure evil."

Trump said he will travel to Las Vegas on Wednesday to meet with law enforcement there, and added that he and his wife, Melania, were praying for the victims of the attack and their families. Sunday's shooting comes on the heels of another national tragedy – Trump was expected to travel to Puerto Rico on Tuesday to survey damage in the wake of Hurricane Maria. MORGAN ROUSSEAU

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Speidi welcomes their spawn

Spencer Pratt and Heidi Montag — better known as Speidi — have welcomed a son. Because there's not yet enough turmoil in this world.

The couple most famous for being the worst on "The Hills," a show that premiered in 2006, welcomed their first child on Sunday, Oct. 1. His name is Gunner Stone, because Pratt has a storied history with loving crystals and rocks.

"Gunner was born at 3:06 p.m.," Speidi's rep told Us Weekly. "He weighed in at 6 pounds, 12 ounces and measured 19 inches long. He has blond hair and blue eyes."

Both Montag and Pratt have typically Montag and Pratt responses to the birth of their first child, with Montag telling the weekly that they're "so blessed to have a beautiful baby boy."

Pratt described the experience as "officially the most lit day of my life." Lit, huh?

Sounds about right.
ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

the word

RACHAEL VAUGHAN CLEMMONS
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rachael.clemmons@metro.us

Gwen & Blake are still happening

Blake Shelton and Gwen Stefani — a perfectly fine couple that nobody in particular asked for — are still vying for your attention, even though, if you're anything like me, you keep forgetting they are a thing.

Stefani joined Shelton onstage for an intimate concert in Oklahoma over the weekend. And in between songs that I'm sure are as twangy and annoying as they are undeniably catchy, Shelton made a shocking slash perfectly normal confession.

Joking about the start of their relationship, the country singer explained they had "started hanging out together and messing around." Which isn't scandalous so much as it is like, pretty standard.

But after a quick shocked look from Stefani, Shelton clarified. "You know, texting each other." Wow.

In conclusion, these two are still epically boring and totally normal and snooze worthy and fine.

Are Corinne & DeMario dating?

Good Lord: After the very uncomfortable, very messy, very messed up "Bachelor in Paradise" situation, it's starting to look like Corinne Olympios and DeMario Jackson are dating.

The maybe couple were spotted holding hands in Disneyland last week. And now, Jackson has spoken out on their friendship — and he's saying a whole lot of nothing. When asked about speculation about his and Olympios' relationship, he said:

"Here's the thing. In the media — the media wanted black versus white. … But in reality, both of us were put against each other."

OK, but are y'all together or nah?

"I'm not trying to date or do anything," he continued. "The only person I'm dating is my career."

I suppose we'll just have to wait and see. Or get bored, forget about it and only be reminded when they announce their relationship on the cover of People, or something.

Chris Evans' guide to a Trump tweet

President Donald Trump has dealt with quite a few tragedies during his short time in the White House so far, but not everyone has been impressed by his responses to these crises–especially Chris Evans.

After calling the commander-in-chief a "reckless moron" and live-tweeting his Charlottesville press conference in the summer, the "Captain America" once again took to Twitter to criticize Trump over the weekend. This time around, Evans lambasted the president for his feud with San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulín Cruz Soto in the wake of the Hurricane Maria disaster in Puerto Rico.

Captain America isn't happy with the president's response to Puerto Rico.

Evans retweeted Trump's post about Democrats influencing her to be "nasty" toward the president, along with a pretty perfect checklist for crafting a Trump tweet.

According to the Marvel movie actor, "A Trump Thread in a Time of Crisis" includes lots of insults and third person references.

Surprisingly, Trump has yet to engage Evans over Twitter despite the numerous callouts, including this perfect response to the president's thoughts on DACA. **MATT JUUL**

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Anthony Anderson pays it forward

The "Black-ish" star on volunteering and what to expect from the fourth season of the hit series.

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@rachaelclemz
rachael.clemmons@metro.us

This season, "Black-ish" will still be outrageously funny — but it'll deal with real issues too. ABC/ERIC MCCANDLESS

"Black-ish" is on its way back on Oct. 3 — and according to star Anthony Anderson, the hit ABC series will be as timely as ever. "You talk about the show being timely and topical," the 47-year-old says over the phone, "[but] sometimes we don't plan it. It's just [something] we wanted to do."

We chatted with the Los Angeles native — who has partnered with State Farm in an effort to encourage others to get out and volunteer to help better the community — about the series' Hamilton-inspired premiere, what to expect from the "Grown-ish" spin-off, and the significance of giving back.

Does giving back have a magnified significance to you as a black man?
If we don't give back to our own community, who will? [For me,] it started in the church with my brothers and my sister and my mom — going over to the church you have that elderly woman who lives by herself. You mow the lawn for her, you bring the mail in, you take her to the grocery store, you take her shopping and it just spreads from there.

Especially with recent disasters across the country, volunteering has the ability to bring people together.
What's interesting is that President Jimmy Carter started Good Neighbor day. He wanted to bring attention to rebuilding our communities as a collective. You look at the times that we're in today: the political climate, the disasters that are going on around our country and around the world. It's even more important today that we band together as a community and volunteer and help one another.

GETTY

"Black-ish" is always so topical. Are there any current issues like this that we can expect the series to face this season?
My character Dre wanted to get rid of Columbus Day because Columbus is a bad person. He's like, "Why are we celebrating somebody like that, but we don't have anything that celebrates our community?" In the state of California, a few weeks after we finished shooting [the premiere], they got rid of Columbus day and renamed it Indigenous Peoples Day. We had no idea. We didn't plan it, it just so happened to coincide with [this] legislature.

Will the "Grown-ish" spin-off be as topical?
They're going to be dealing with subject matter for young adults living on their own for the first time — the freedom that they have as these college students, dealing with sex, dealing with drugs, dealing with alcohol, dealing with newfound responsibility. [It will cover] the realities of what we all went through in going to college, thinking we know everything now that we're out of the house.

Once you're out of the house, you realize how little you know.
That's daunting, like, "How am I going to survive?"

State Farm wants people to join them in giving back to local communities across the country. You can make a positive difference too by volunteering in your neighborhood. To learn more go to NeighborhoodofGood.com.

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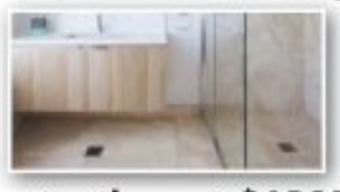

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10 Can't miss comedy shows in October

Tickle your funny bone all month long.

MIKE FENN
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Don't miss out on Tracy Morgan performing at the Tower Theater Oct. 28. GETTY IMAGES

A gathering of comedians pose after a recent episode of "This Delinquent Life" at Good Good Comedy Theatre. Clockwise from top: Andrew Jeffrey Wright, Hannah Harkness, host Chris Stenta, Bino Brogden, Tommie Turner. CHRIS STENTA

October brings with it chilly weather, the onset of holiday shopping stress and the annual possibility that you will eat your weight in bite-size candy. Here are 10 shows that are guaranteed to be heavy on the laughs and rare on the scares.

1 This Delinquent Life
Join local comedian Chris Stenta as he and fellow comedians discuss serious topics at this monthly show at Good Good Comedy Theatre in Chinatown. The discussion promises to break down into "absolute chaos" that could very well involve the audience! Stenta will be joined by show regulars Bino Brogden and Gina Gibbons as well as LUMP Hamilton, Michael Kelly and Tommie Turner. This event also appears in podcast form every Tuesday night.
Started Oct. 1, 10 p.m., $5
Good Good Comedy Theatre
215 N 11th St., 215-399-1279
goodgoodcomedy.com

2 Lewis Black
Ranting on everything from politics to modern day society, Lewis Black made a name for himself on Comedy Central's "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" and has since branched out to success in movies, TV and of course, critically-acclaimed stand-up specials. See his unique on-the-edge-of-a-breakdown style live and in person at the Borgata in Atlantic City.
Oct. 6 - 7(Note: Oct. 7 is sold out), 9 p.m., $65-75
Borgata Music Box
1 Borgata Way, Atlantic City, NJ, 609-317-1996, theborgata.com.

3 Anxie-tease: A Mental health Burlesque
Join local comedians Libby Reindl and Shannon Fahey in this unique show that explores what goes on in the mind of Shelby. The character's various thought processes and sexual awakenings will be brought to life by comedians and burlesque performers Liberty Rose, Rose Luardo, Molly Hanulec, Sean Devaney Sullivan, Michael Kelly, Rebekah Rickards, and Taylor Plunkett-Clements.
Oct. 10, 8:30 p.m., $15
Good Good Comedy Theatre
215 N. 11th St., 215-399-1279
goodgoodcomedy.com

4 Vagina Strong Showcase & Book Signing
Local comedian and storyteller Cecily Alexandria recently self-published her first book, "Vagina Strong: Faith, Sex, and Life Through the Journey of a Virgin." To commemorate the

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effort, she will be hosting a book signing, complete with a reading of excerpts from the book's hilarious and personal pages. Joining her will be renowned area comedians Rachel Fogletto, LaTice and Belynda Cleare.
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Cecily Alexandria
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5 Richard Lewis
With numerous stand-up specials and roles in such TV hits as "Curb Your Enthusiasm" and "Anything But Love," Richard Lewis has been entertaining audiences since the 1980s.
Oct. 19 - Oct. 21, 7:30 p.m. & 10 p.m., $25-38
Helium Comedy Club
2031 Sansom St.
215-496-9001
philadelphia.heliumcomedy.com

6 Nikki Glaser
Up-and-coming comedian Nikki Glaser has kept modern audiences laughing with her numerous TV appearances, including "@midnight" and "Not Safe With Nikki Glaser," as well as roles in such films as "Trainwreck." Catch her at Punch Line Philly, the city's newest comedy club in Fishtown.
Oct. 19 - Oct. 21, 7:30 p.m., 8 p.m. & 10 p.m., $25-35
Punch Line Philly
33 E Laurel St
215-606-6555
punchlinephilly.com

7 Samantha Ruddy and Dina Hashem
Two of the national comedy scene's hottest names will be in town on the same bill! Head on over to Good Good Comedy Theatre to catch the acts of Samantha Ruddy (Collegehumor, Reductress) and Dina Hashem (Comedy Central, The New Yorker).
Oct. 21, 10 p.m., $10
Good Good Comedy Theatre
215 N 11th St.
215-399-1279
goodgoodcomedy.com

Comedian Nikki Glaser comes to Punchline Philly in Fishtown both Oct. 19 and Oct. 21.
GETTY IMAGES

8 Michael Ian Black
Comedian, actor, and author Michael Ian Black has brought his signature deadpan, absurd humor to projects like "The State" and "Wet Hot American Summer."
Oct. 26 - Oct. 28
7:30 p.m. and 10 p.m., $20-28, Helium Comedy Club
2031 Sansom St.,
215-496-9001
philadelphia.heliumcomedy.com

9 Justify Your Love
Is a song or movie that is universally hated one of your guilty pleasures? Local comedian and storyteller T.J. Hurley forces his guests to not only reveal these titles, but also defend them against an ever-rotating panel of very "judgey judges" at this monthly show at Good Good Comedy Theatre.
Oct. 28, 7 p.m., $10
Good Good Comedy Theatre
215 N 11th St., 215-399-1279
goodgoodcomedy.com

10 Tracy Morgan
Star of "Saturday Night Live" and "30 Rock," nationally beloved comedian Tracy Morgan has made an impressive comeback since a near-fatal car accident in 2014. For one night only, he will bring his unique observational style and delivery to the Tower Theatre in Upper Darby.
Oct. 28
8 p.m., $48-75,
Tower Theater
S. 69th St & Ludlow Streets, Upper Darby, 610-352-2887
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Beauty tips for women with breast cancer

wellbeing

"Pretty Sick: The Beauty Guide for Women with Cancer" is out this month from Grand Central Life & Style. JAMIE LEE REARDIN

Breast-cancer survivor and beauty expert Caitlin M. Kiernan gives advice on how to look your best when you feel your worst.

KATE MOONEY
@yatinbrooklyn
kate.mooney@metro.us

When you've been diagnosed with breast cancer, looking good is probably the last thing your mind. But for breast cancer survivor Caitlin M. Kiernan, the outward physical changes she experienced had a devastating psychological impact.

"For me, it was that cancer not only turned my life upside down, but it took away everything that allowed me to represent myself as an individual woman — my style, my personality," recalls the journalist. "The health crisis, I had people helping me manage; but when it came to helping me manage my own body, I was really lost."

Lucky for Kiernan, years as a reporter in the fashion-and-beauty space had gained her a Rolodex of beauty experts, such as celebrity hairstylist Ted Gibson and dermatologist Dr. Heidi Waldorf, who she sought out for advice on how to navigate the side effects she was dealing with.

"Cancer is one of those diseases that once you begin treatment it goes from a private experience to a very public experience," says Kiernan. With their tips, she not only felt better, but she noticed that people were less able to tell she was suffering from cancer.

Catilin M. Kiernan, breast cancer survivor and author of "Pretty Sick: The Beauty Guide for Women with Cancer." MARK WEISS

The 46-year-old, who is now three years cancer-free, wanted to share her knowledge with other women, too, so she wrote "Pretty Sick: The Beauty Guide for Women with Cancer," out this month from Grand Central Life & Style. She shares advice for combating key trouble areas, from hair loss to sexual dysfunction.

Hair and nails

Chemotherapy can cause your hair to fall out and your nails to become brittle and fall off. To treat both issues, Kiernan recommends cold cap therapy, which helps protect hair follicles and nail beds.

When it comes to picking out a wig, Kiernan says go with synthetic over real-hair. The latter is too expensive (starts at $500) and requires too much upkeep — you have to wash it and blow-dry it. A synthetic wig is much more affordable (starts at $35) and easy to manage, and if you want to try a different style or color, you won't break the bank switching one out.

As for nails, she recommends making a habit of applying hand cream and cuticle oil on a daily basis. "It won't keep your nails from falling out, but it will help allow them to grow in stronger and healthier," she says.

Skin

Another side-effect of chemo: Skin becomes dry, irritated and discolored, often yellowing — for women of all races. To cover up problem skin, she suggests a thick foundation — one that's "wax-based and gives you a more opaque coverage" — with a subtle yellow undertone.

As for treating scars, Kiernan recommends compression therapy: Apply silicone-based treatments, such as Scar Away patches, 7-10 days after surgery.

Teeth

"Any problem that you have in your mouth is going to get 10 times worse the minute you start chemotherapy," says Kiernan. Whether you need to get a tooth pulled or have a root canal, make your appointment before you begin cancer treatment, if possible. If you ignore the problems, you're more susceptible to developing a bacterial infection that could cause you to stop your chemotherapy.

Sexual health

"Ninety percent of women who go through treatment for cancer experience some kind of sexual dysfunction," says Kiernan. Whether that's vaginal dryness or difficulty achieving orgasm, Kiernan advises talking to your OB/GYN about the changes you're experiencing. There are things you can do — from pelvic floor exercises to laser treatments, such as those offered by former "Real Housewife of New York" Cindy Barshop at her spa VSPOT — to help restore your sexual health.

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Some patients who undergo hip or knee replacement surgery will need a future revision joint replacement. ISTOCK

It's smooth sailing for most patients who undergo a hip or knee replacement surgery, but for some, a future revision joint replacement comes with the upkeep. It's a delicate procedure that requires a steady hand and a well of prior experience. Dr. Gregory Deirmengian, one of the Rothman Institute's leading joint surgeons, has both. Metro caught up with him to clarify everything you need to know about corrective joint surgery.

What exactly is a revision joint replacement? Hip and knee replacements are amongst the most successful of surgeries, but unfortunately, just like any other mechanical device, they can fail over time. This can happen in a number of ways, but the most common is wear and tear. In other cases, they can become loose from the bone, infected or unstable. A revision simply means that we're taking an existing problem knee or hip replacement and redoing it to correct a new issue.

How long do joint replacements typically last? For knees, data we have suggests a 20 percent failure rate at 20 years. When it comes to hips, thanks to amazing advancements, research predicts them to last 40 to 50 years.

What are some signs that you might need one? Usually there are symptoms; the exception is that hip bearing wear doesn't always cause pain, which is why we recommend patients come in to see us every few years for X-rays. Most modes of failure usually cause pain, swelling, and stiffness. The joint starts to feel like the person never had surgery. It's very similar to arthritis.

What research should patients do beforehand? The most important thing is to go to a surgeon who does a lot of revisions. There are lots of doctors out there who do hip and knee replacements, but not that many who specialize in revisions.

What's the recovery like? The recovery for revisions can be more difficult than the first time around, but it is also worth mentioning that revision surgery is amongst the most satisfying surgeries because patients often do really well with it. With a hip or knee replacement that has failed, they come in with substantial pain and the revision leads to a drastic improvement in the symptoms. I'd say my revision patients are often even happier than my first-time replacement patients. MARIANNE HAYES

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ANATOMY OF A HUGE WIN: THE 404 SECONDS WHERE EAGLES GREW UP

The Eagles clung to a two-point lead Sunday with 6:44 left. Jim Schwartz's defense had lost momentum to tantrum-thrower Philip Rivers, who'd just engineered consecutive 75-yard TD drives.

Once again, a win was in jeopardy. The Eagles got the ball with 404 seconds left and then …

- *1st and 10 at PHI 25 - (6:44 left) Wentz pass short right to Jeffery for 8 yards.*
- *2nd and 2 at PHI 33 - (6:07) Clement sweeps right end for 6 yards (1st down).*

You judge a young QB by poise under pressure, and Carson Wentz exuded that Sunday. The goal on this drive was to hold the ball, kill clock, make no mistakes. Wentz, clearly, was in charge. Throughout the day, he checked out of pass plays when he saw the better opportunity on a run.

Wentz's stats were decent — 17-of-31 for 242 yards and a touchdown. He had no turnovers, escaped sacks and won a second straight one-score contest. These things matter — consider that the Eagles won only one game last season that finished within seven points.

GLEN MACNOW

OPINION

Glen Macnow has been an outspoken voice in Philly sports for nearly three decades. @realglenmacnow

- *1st and 10 at PHI 39 - (5:23) Smallwood off right tackle for 3 yards.*
- *2nd and 7 at PHI 42 - (4:38) Wentz pass short middle to Ertz for 5 yards.*
- *3rd and 2 at PHI 47 - (3:55) Clement up the middle for 2 yards (1st down).*

With Darren Sproles gone, we wondered how Doug Pederson would use his RBs. The coach employed a three-headed monster Sunday, awarding double-digit carries to LeGarrette Blount, Wendell Smallwood and rookie Corey Clement.

The Eagles ran for 214 yards, giving them 407 the past two games. Give credit to Pederson, for resisting his Andy Reid pass-always instincts. Give credit to Howie Roseman, for signing and keeping Clement as an undrafted free agent.

And give credit to an offensive line – rotating left guards and all – that excels at run blocking.

LeGarrette Blount had a breakout day Sunday, tallying the most yards for an Eagles running back since 2014. GETTY IMAGES

As the Eagles ground out yards on this last drive, Jason Kelce and Stefen Wisniewski hustled down field to rub out would-be tacklers.

- *1st and 10 at PHI 49 - (3:10) Wentz pass short left to Smith for 9 yards.*
- *2nd and 1 at LAC 42 – (2:26) Smallwood up the middle for no gain. (TO, Chargers)*
- *3rd and 1 at LAC 42 - (2:22) Clement up the middle for 4 yards. (TO Chargers)*

At this point, you could sense the Eagles' confidence rise. Wide receivers threw key blocks. Defensive players rose from the bench to cheer. The Chargers sagged and started burning time-outs.

And the crowd … well, that's the thing. The Chargers move to Los Angeles gives them no home-field advantage. The small soccer stadium was filled with green-clad fans who turned this into the Eagles ninth home game.

"We heard them the whole time," said Kelce. "When people cheer like that 3,000 miles away from home, you can't imagine what a lift it gives the entire team."

- *1st and 10 at LAC 38 - (2:18) Blount sweeps right tackle for 3 yards.*
- *2nd and 7 at LAC 35 - (2:00) Blount left end for 6 yards. (TO Chargers)*
- *3rd and 1 at LAC 29 - (1:54) Blount up middle for 15 yards.*

Sunday's biggest story was Blount. Two weeks ago, he was inexplicably shunned by Pederson and had no carries. Since then, the veteran back has "run angry," according to guard Brandon Brooks. In Sunday's 4th quarter, he carried eight times for 88 yards, including a 68-yard rumble that brutalized the entire Chargers defense.

After Blount's last run to the Chargers' 29, the Eagles ran out the clock with two kneel downs. As Wentz said afterward, "You always want to end with a touchdown or in victory formation."

That last drive — 404 seconds — showed a team with poise and talent. They got the ball and never gave it back. That's what good teams do.

5 Numbers to know about the Eagles' prolific offense

The Eagles' offense was hyped as potentially one of the most improved unites in football heading into 2017 after an action-packed offseason. But you know what happens with hyped offenses.

The 2011 Eagles "Dream Team," and Chip Kelly's fast-paced offense each fell well short of expectations — and this year's squad held possible let-down criteria as well.

But so far, the offense has been shockingly productive and is in the top one or two in several key categories, thanks in large part to a run game that has produced 193 and 241 yards respectively in back-to-back wins.

"It's been a combination of great game planning by [Offensive line] Coach [Jeff] Stoutland, the desire and the will and the want to by the offensive line," head coach Doug Pederson said. "With tight ends and quarterback, Carson [Wentz] being a part of that. And then just execution on game day. And it's just all combinations of that.":

Ahead of what could be another win this coming Sunday at home against Arizona, here are five stats about Philly's offense you should know about:

392.5

The Eagles are averaging the second most yards per game in the entire NFL. Their 572 rushing yards in four games is the second most in the league as well.

8

With eight consecutive games with 20 or more points stretching back to 2016, the Eagles have the longest active streak in football..

24

A true West Coast offense, the Eagles move the ball down the field deliberately and systemically, as demonstraited by their 24 first downs per game, second in the NFL behind New England.

35:28

And that West Coast style translates into a dominant time of possession advantage. The Eagles have the ball more than any other NFL team.

The 3-1 Eagles are in first in the NFL East. GETTY IMAGES

50.85%

On third down, only the Packers (by seven hundreths of a percent) are better, helping the Eagles to stay on the field and let their injury-riddled defense rest. EVAN MACY

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2017 Phillies in review: What's worth remembering from rebuilding season?

With nearly 100 losses, the Phillies putrid record in the stat book has hidden gems and reasons for hope.

JON MARKS
@MetroPhilly
sports@metro.us

Lose 96 in a season and finish in last place and there's usually not much to feel good about.

Unless you're the 2017 Phillies.

While GM Matt Klentak decided Friday that Pete Mackanin would not be back to engineer a rebuild that has taken remarkable shape over the past two months, whoever is calling the shots next year should have a lot to work with. The late season emergence of Rhys Hoskins, J.P. Crawford, Jorge Alfaro and Nick Williams, along with the emergence of the bullpen, can't help but give even cynical Phillies fans reason for hope.

And considering one playoff team, the Twins, lost 103 games last season, indicates it doesn't necessarily have to take long to go from very bad to good. Whether the 2018 Phillies can follow their lead will require far greater consistency, along with reliable pitching, not to mention plenty of luck.

But that's for next season, as Klentak will try to build on what's already here, while trying to add needed pieces on the mound. Before looking too far ahead, though, it's time to look back.

Then try to forget.

Most Improved: Adam Morgan, P

After making the team out of spring training, he was quickly sent to the minors, presumably not to be heard from again. But the 27-year-old lefthander re-invented himself, first as a long man out of the bullpen, then as late inning force. Prior to giving up a three-run homer Saturday he'd allowed just three earned runs since July 31.

Honorable Mention: Aaron Altherr

Biggest Disappointment: Maikel Franco, 3B

How can the team leader in home runs and RBI's, who can field his position expertly be a disappointment? Start with his .230 average and .282 on base percentage (OBP). Franco can look great in flashes, but those flashes became more infrequent as the season wore on. The player who was a 2015 version of Rhys Hoskins (14, 50. 280 in 80 games) could be trade bait just two years later.

Honorable Mention: Jerad Eickhoff

Best Hitting Performance: Rhys Hoskins

After finally being summoned from Lehigh Valley Aug. 10, Hoskins started slow and tailed off at the end. In between, he made history, bashing a major league record 10 homers in his first 17 games. Not only that, but he revitalized a team that had been dreadful all summer, as the Phils played close to .500 b all after the all-star break.

Honorable Mention: Altherr's grand slam off Clayton Kershaw, triggering the Phils to take three of four from the Dodgers.

Best Pitching Performance: Aaron Nola

There's not a lot to choose from here, but Aaron Nola's 10-game stretch of not allowing

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When 2018 begins, the Phillies will have a new manager leading a young and promising squad. GETTY IMAGES

more than two runs gets the call. The 24-year-old Nola who began the season as a question mark coming off an injury, has established himself as the staff ace, while last's year No. 1 Eickhoff and Vince Velasquez are filled with uncertainty

Honerable Mention: Pat Neshek

Biggest Source of Frustration: Health, Strikeouts

So many, but let's go with Velasquez continued health issues which have made it difficult to determine how best to use him. While some see him as a potential closer he's never done it and as a starter he's usually at over above the 100 pitch mark by the fifth. Right behind is Odubel Herrera's maddening inability to gauge the strike zone (125 strikeouts, 31 walks), which negate much of his production as a whole. Strikeouts in general are a concern. Six Phils — Herrera, Altherr, Freddy Galvis, Cameron Rupp, Tommy Joseph and Cesar Hernandez — have over 100 strikeouts and both Franco and Nick Williams are right on the fringe. Making better contact has to be a must next season.

Biggest Reason for Hope: Young Bats

The emergence of all those bats — Hoskins, Williams, Altherr Alfaro — with more waiting in the wings, led by Scott Kingery. On the mound Nola's development, coupled with the solidification of the bullpen thanks to Morgan, Hoby Milner, Luis Garcia and even Hector Neris, who's seldom pretty but did reel off 20 consecutive saves.

Biggest Question Mark: The Rotation

Between Eickhoff, Velasquez, Nick Pivetta, Ben Lively, Jake Thompson, Mark Leiter, Zach Eflin and Henderson Alvarez who steps up to join Nola in the rotation? Or can Klentak either deal for or sign for more effective pitchers than Charlie Morton and Clay Buchholz? Where does Crawford, a defensive whiz but still a work in progress at the plate, play? Speaking of trades what can Joseph, Galvis, Hernandez, Rupp, even Franco—any of whom might be deemed expendable–bring back? And if Franco returns will the light go on under a new manager or will he continue to scuffle?

The off-season begins now for the Phillies, whose removal of Mackanin seems to be telling the baseball world they're finally ready to compete. After the last few years of dread for Phillies' fans March 29 (the season's opener in Atlanta) can't get here fast enough.

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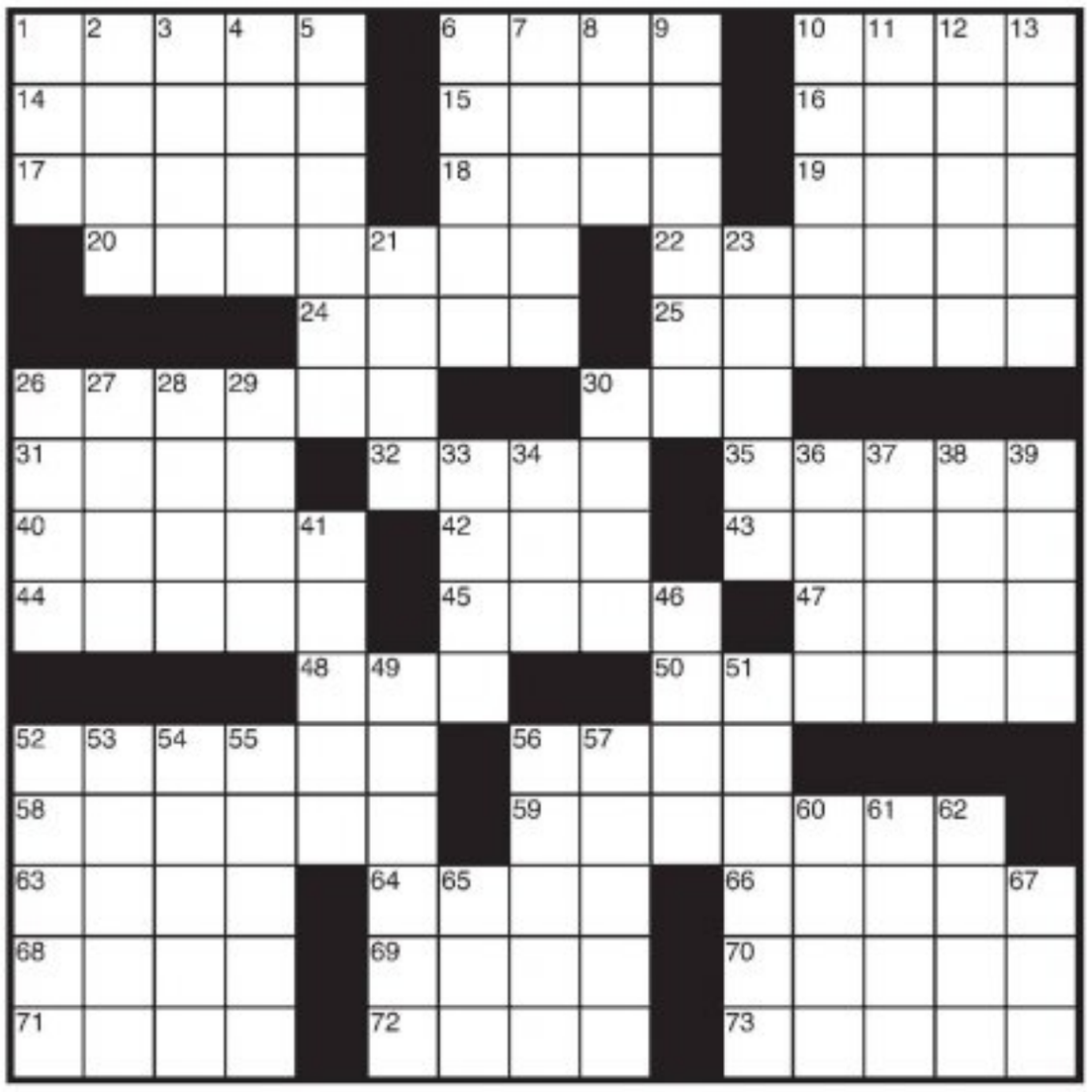
28 Nibble
29 Irwin of the PGA
30 Slow pitches
33 Grounds for a suit
34 Tetra- less one
36 A throng
37 Moby Dick pursuer
38 Caught the bus
39 Frog cousin
41 Delight in
46 Red-waxed cheese
49 Makes sense (2 wds.)
51 Astonished
52 Cumin and mint
53 Benefit
54 Castle in Ruritania
55 Uneasy
56 Bridge support
57 Kind of race
60 Starlet's dream
61 Door opener
62 Fall mo.
65 Pizarro's quest
67 – Moines



metro.us/sudoku

easy

7			1					
	5			9			4	
6	1			8	5			9
		7			3		1	8
9				5				6
4	3		6			2		
8			5	6			2	1
	2			7			6	
					9			3

hard

	2	7				4	6	
6	5							9
				7	6	3		5
		6			8			7
2								8
7			1			5		
1		8	2	3				
4							8	2
	6	2				7	5	

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Aries Don't let a lack of qualifications or other people's responsibilities stop you from making a move or reaching your set goal. Common sense will be required.

Taurus Get involved in a creative project or look for a way to make improvements that will contribute to your appearance and encourage you to be more outgoing.

Gemini Difficulties with children, a loved one or someone who is putting too many demands on you must be regulated carefully. Make it clear what you will put up with.

Cancer Forming a partnership will be to your advantage. Share your thoughts and interests to help develop allies and encourage opportunity. Romance is in the stars.

Leo Change can be good if it's well thought out and made for the right reason. Someone you are dealing with will have ulterior motives. Avoid emotional manipulation.

Virgo Look for a unique way to use your talents to earn a living. If you enjoy what you do, you will do a good job. Personal growth is highlighted.

Libra Handle your affairs personally. Don't be fooled by someone using emotional situations to alter your way of thinking. Protect your heart.

Scorpio An interesting option will arise regarding your lifestyle. Working alongside others will help you determine what's best for you. Romance will improve your personal life.

Sagittarius It's important to take care of your physical and emotional health. Don't give in to someone using manipulative tactics to get you to do something you don't want to do.

Capricorn Creative financial moves will help you secure your position, but get all the facts first. Someone will try to mislead you or persuade you to take part in a risky venture.

Aquarius A partnership will need to be monitored carefully. If someone tries to use emotional tactics to get his or her way, shut him or her down quickly.

Pisces Don't be fooled by what others do. Look out for your own interests and be careful to weed out what is and isn't true when dealing with partners. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

A	S	T	I	■	P	A	S	T	■	■	L	A	R	A
H	A	W	N	■	E	S	T	O	P	■	O	V	A	L
E	R	I	C	■	S	H	A	M	U	■	N	I	P	S
M	I	N	I	S	T	E	R	■	P	R	E	S	T	O
■	■	■	T	E	E	■	E	X	T	O	L	■	■	■
R	I	V	I	E	R	A	■	R	E	C	Y	C	L	E
E	M	E	N	D	■	B	L	A	N	K	■	Y	A	M
T	A	N	G	■	R	A	I	T	T	■	S	N	U	B
A	G	O	■	B	U	T	T	E	■	E	L	I	D	E
R	E	M	O	R	S	E	■	D	E	D	U	C	E	D
■	■	■	B	O	S	S	A	■	R	I	G	■	■	■
S	N	E	E	Z	E	■	M	O	R	T	G	A	G	E
L	I	V	Y	■	L	L	A	M	A	■	I	C	O	N
A	L	E	E	■	L	I	N	E	N	■	S	H	O	D
B	E	N	D	■	■	S	A	N	D	■	H	E	N	S

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